

CREOLE KINGS

OF NEW ORLEANS

VOLUME TWO

LLOYD PRICE

GUITAR SLIM

EARL KING

CLIFTON CHENIER

ART NEVILLE

PROFESSOR LONGHAIR

AND MORE!

25 GREAT SONGS 25

- 1. THE ROYAL TENGES:**
BOUNCIN' THE BOOGIE 1:56
[Specialty 444] Recorded July 2, 1952
- 2. LITTLE MR. MIDNIGHT
WITH PAUL GAYTEN BAND:**
GOT A BRAND NEW BABY 2:16
[Regal 3287] September 1950
- 3. LITTLE MR. MIDNIGHT
WITH PAUL GAYTEN BAND:**
4 O'CLOCK BLUES 2:31
[Regal 3287] September 1950
- 4. LLOYD PRICE:**
RESTLESS HEART 2:33
[SP 440] June 26, 1952
- 5. LLOYD PRICE:**
AIN'T IT A SHAME 2:40
[SP 452] October 13, 1952
- 6. WILLIE JOHNSON:**
SAY BABY 2:14
[SP 493] March 18, 1954
- 7. WILLIE JOHNSON:**
THAT NIGHT 2:37
[SP 495] March 14, 1954
- 8. EARL KING:**
EATING AND SLEEPING 2:14
[SP 531] unknown date
- 9. LLOYD LAMBERT:**
HEAVY SUGAR 2:50
[SP 553] April 28, 1955
- 10. GUITAR SLIM:**
THINK IT OVER 2:28
[SP 557] April 19 or 25, 1955
- 11. ERNEST KADOR:**
SO GLAD YOU'RE MINE 2:13
[SP 2167] October 25, 1956
- 12. BIG BOY MYLES
AND THE SHA-WEEZ:**
THAT GIRL I MARRIED 2:07
[SP 564] September 25, 1955
- 13. CLIFTON CHENIER:**
SQUEEZE BOX BOOGIE 1:56
[SP 568] September 9, 1955
- 14. BUMPS BLACKWELL:**
GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY 2:12
previously unissued demo; unknown date
- 15. ROY MONTRELL:**
OOOH-WOW 2:27
[SP 583] August 18, 1956
- 16. EDGAR BLANCHARD:**
STEPPING HIGH 1:50
[SP 586] August 17, 1956
- 17. LI'L MILLET:**
ALL AROUND THE WORLD 2:25
previously unissued demo; unknown date
- 18. ART NEVILLE:**
OOOH-WHEE BABY 2:08
[SP 592] October 25, 1956
- 19. LARRY WILLIAMS:**
JUST BECAUSE 2:16
[SP 597] February 25, 1957
- 20. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
CRY PRETTY BABY 2:16
[Ebb 101] circa March 1957
- 21. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
LOOK WHAT YOU'RE
DOING TO ME 2:25
[Ebb 106] circa March 1957
- 22. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
MISERY 1:59
[Ebb 106] circa March 1957
- 23. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
LOOKA, NO HAIR 2:04
[Ebb 121] circa March 1957
- 24. THE MONITORS:**
ROCK 'N' ROLL FEVER 2:25
[SP 622] circa 1958
- 25. JERRY BYRNE:**
CARRY ON 1:55
[SP 662] August 16, 1958

Original sessions produced by

ART RUPE, FRED MENDELJOHN, BUMPS BLACKWELL, LEE RUPE, or HAROLD BATTISTE

Compiled and produced for reissue by **BILLY VERA**

NEW ORLEANS WAS A CRADLE OF RHYTHM AND BLUES CREATIVITY DURING THE 1950s. COMPILED BY BILLY VERA FROM THE VAULTS OF THREE RECORD COMPANIES—REGAL, SPECIALTY, AND EBB—THIS COLLECTION PRESENTS SOME OF THE MAJOR CRESCENT CITY MUSIC MAKERS OF THAT PERIOD, INCLUDING LLOYD PRICE, EARL KING, GUITAR SLIM, ERNIE K-DOE, ART NEVILLE, LARRY WILLIAMS, AND PROFESSOR LONGHAIR, ALONG WITH SUCH LESSER KNOWN FIGURES AS LITTLE MR. MIDNIGHT AND JERRY BYRNE. INCLUDED ARE PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED DEMOS OF TWO TUNES POPULARIZED BY LITTLE RICHARD: BUMPS BLACKWELL'S RENDERING OF "GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY," AND "ALL AROUND THE WORLD" BY LI'L MILLET.

TOTAL TIME 60:00

Total time has been rounded off to the nearest minute.

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Ever since the days of Jelly Roll Morton, the music of New Orleans has been considered somehow special. It didn't hurt that, over the years, roving ambassadors from that city with colorful names like King Oliver, Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Champion Jack DuPree, Professor Longhair, Fats Domino, "Frogman" Henry, and Dr. John the Night Tripper added to the cachet of "Creole babies with flashing eyes."

It seems that everything about the Crescent City is unique and done to excess. Folks drink more, party more, the food is spicier and the women are prettier. They speak in a dialect that is half deep-South Negro and half Brooklyn Italian. It is spoken by people, white and black, who proudly consider themselves half crazy. It is a place where many people, black and white, grow up having spoken an archaic French dialect for up to 60% of their childhoods.

The music played there traditionally has had an exaggerated emphasis on rhythm, most likely from the city's proximity to the Caribbean islands. It has also always had more of a sense of harmony than other American African-derived forms, perhaps due to the

strong European ties of the area. Finally, there is a greater respect for melody, both written and improvised, undoubtedly a result of the fact that the common religious background is Roman Catholic, with that church's musical tradition of Gregorian chant and hymns, as opposed to the Southern Baptist "shoutin' and hollerin'" style.

Prior to World War II, little recording was done there; as a result, musicians like Armstrong had to travel elsewhere to make their marks, usually to recording centers like Chicago or New York, which fed the idea of New Orleans music (and musicians) being "exotic."

After the war, however, the new independent record labels—founded to fill the void left when, due to wartime shortages, the majors abandoned "specialized" markets, such as "hillbilly," "race," polka, and other ethnic divisions—headed to locations like New Orleans in search of talent.

In 1947, DeLuxe Records of New Jersey had hits with New Orleans artists Paul Gayten, Annie Laurie, and Roy Brown. By the end of the decade, commercially successful recordings had been made there by Mercury (Roy

Byrd), Regal (Larry Darnell, Chubby Newsome), and, most prolifically, Imperial (Fats Domino) under the supervision of Dave Bartholomew, who over the next several years tied up the lion's share of the city's talent pool.

Paul Gayten was the first R&B-era New Orleans performer to have a chart record with his "True (You Don't Love Me)" in 1947. His labels, Deluxe and later Regal, also used his band as accompaniment for vocalists such as Annie Laurie, Chubby Newsome, Vanita Smythe, Roy Brown, Little Jimmy Scott, Larry Darnell, and one LITTLE MR. MIDNIGHT, heard here. From his name and style, we can safely

assume that the goal here was to give the public a kiddie version of Roy Brown, who was then at his peak of popularity.

At first, I thought these sides might be a sped-up tape of Roy, but

one listen to Cecil Payne's baritone sax solo on "Got a Brand New Baby" proves otherwise. Former Dizzy Gillespie sideman Ray Abrams takes a mean tenor solo on the slow, down-in-the-alley "4 O'Clock in the Morning" from September 1950.

It was the success and sound of Domino's records that brought Specialty's Art Rupe to New Orleans in 1952. The story is well-known among aficionados of how, after endless auditions, Rupe was ready to pack up for Los Angeles when a very young LLOYD PRICE broke down in tears as he sang his song for the record man, who stayed on to produce the biggest record of the year, "Lawdy Miss Clawdy."

The record, which featured Bartholomew's band with Fats on piano, wound up being one of the first to sell in large quantities to both black and white fans.

Lloyd's two cuts on this album, his



follow-up hits to "Lawdy Miss Clawdy," did very well in the R&B market without the crossover success of their predecessor. Uncle Sam broke Lloyd's career momentum, depriving Specialty of any long-term stream of chart toppers, but after the Army, he went on to score on ABC-Paramount with smashes like "Just Because," "Stagger Lee," and "Personality."

THE ROYAL KINGS is a pseudonym for Bartholomew's house band which, on this date, included Herb Hardesty and Joseph Harris, saxes; Salvador Doucette, piano; Ernest McLean, guitar; Frank Fields, bass; and Earl Palmer, drums. A year or so later, Hardesty went full-time with Fats Domino and was replaced by Paul Gayten sideman Lee Allen, who became one of the most recorded tenor sax soloists of the rock 'n' roll era.

WILLIE JOHNSON had already recorded for labels like Imperial, Sittin' in With, and Savoy prior to his one date for Specialty in 1954. Lack of an identifiable sound probably kept this Houston singer/pianist from the big time.

Beloved in his hometown, EARL KING had middling success over the years as a songwriter ("Trick Bag," "Come On [Let The Good Times Roll]") and as a

singer ("Those Lonely, Lonely Nights"). He began as a Guitar Slim clone, but over time developed a funky style of his own, both on his guitar and in his writing.

There were few performers as flashy and impassioned as Eddie "GUITAR SLIM" Jones. After a false start at Imperial, he had some regional heat on Jim Bulliet's J-B label with "Feelin' Sad," later cut by Ray Charles. Ray arranged and played piano on Slim's next, for Specialty, "The Things That I Used to Do." A number one seller, it was cut at Cosimo Matassa's J&M Studio with Slim's usual cohorts, early Fender bassman Lloyd Lambert's Band. Slim's offering here is "Think It Over," also cut for Specialty by Clifton Chenier and written by one W.E. Buyem (get it?).

Is there anyone out there left who doesn't know that 1955's ERNEST KADOR was to become in a few years the one and only-est Ernie "Boin K-doe, Boin!" K-doe of "Mother-in-Law" fame? Like hometown boys Huey Smith and Earl (King) Johnson, Ernie had once made a record for Savoy. K-doe's was under the group moniker Blue Diamonds. After "Mother-in-Law," Ernie's candle dimmed but he still

made a few killers like "A Certain Girl."

BIG BOY MYLES AND THE SHA-WEEZ was a group destined to make collector's items. Their one effort for Aladdin, "No One to Love Me," sells in the thousand dollar range, a dollar for each out-of-tune note. Big Boy's Specialty sides, however, rock out in rare fashion. The group was also the Cane Cutters behind Sugarboy ("Jockamo") on Checker.

CLIFTON CHENIER is, of course, the late King of Zydeco or maybe still the king, just no longer residing on the planet. He made the accordion, that unhippest of instruments, sound hip. He sang in Cajun French and you didn't care what he was singing about—he just made you feel real good, cher.

ROY MONTRELL and EDGAR BLANCHARD were two wonderful guitarists

in a town not especially known for its guitar talent. Blanchard was a member of Paul Gayten's early trio and later had his own band, the Gondoliers. Montrell was a student of Blanchard's who hit the road first with Roy Milton's band,

and later with Lloyd Price. Both did much of the studio work in town during its Fifties heyday. The demo of "Good Golly Miss Molly," heard here comes from a tape box marked "Roy Montrell." But, as the message to "Pappy" (Art Rupe) makes clear, it is actually the non-singing Bumps Blackwell, presenting his new song, co-written with John Marascalco, for Rupe's consideration. Most

likely Montrell is the guitarist.

McKinley Millet *aka* LI'L MILLET made the swampy "Rich Woman," heard on *Creole Kings of New Orleans, vol. 1* (SPCD-2168-2) and, as evidenced by



this demo, wrote "All Around the World," which had been the "B" side of Little Richard's "The Girl Can't Help It."

Mac's replacement in the Hawketts ("Mardi Gras Mambo") was ART NEVILLE, brother of Aaron and later leader of the Meters. Art's contribution here is "Oooh-Whее Baby," which was to be revived as "Gee Baby" on Ace by Joe & Ann.

LARRY WILLIAMS was once Lloyd Price's valet. When Lloyd started his own label, Art Rupe covered his first single, "Just Because," with Larry, hitting #11 and opening the door for his follow-up, the classic "Short Fat Fannie."

These four PROFESSOR LONGHAIR sides from 1957 were cut for Ebb, the label begun by Lee Rupe after her divorce from Art. "Looka, No Hair" is a remake of Fess's only chart record, "Baldhead," as by Roy Byrd on Mercury, 1950.



Despite his slender chart showing, Fess reached legendary status for the remainder of his life after his rediscovery in 1970 by collector James LaRocca. Longhair's influence on subsequent New Orleans pianists cannot be overestimated. Huey Smith, Allen Toussaint, and Dr. John have all sipped at the font of Fess's genius.

THE MONITORS were that rarity, a New Orleans doo-wop group. The members were William Tircuit, Robert Kidd, Clarence Phoenix, and Adolph Smith. Smith wrote the Spiders' hit "You're the One," later revived by the O'Jays and Lou Rawls.

JERRY BYRNE'S "Carry On," like

"Lights Out," its predecessor on Volume 1, was co-written by Mac Rebennack *aka* Dr. John and produced by Harold Battiste, soon to become head honcho of that great failed co-op experiment, A.F.O. (All For One) Records.

A.F.O. was formed when several of the local studio players decided that too much of the pie was going outside of New Orleans to labels in New York and Los Angeles. After some terrific records by Prince La La, Tami Lynn, and Willie Tee, and even a giant hit, "I Know" by Barbara George, the label folded. Battiste moved to L.A. where he led the band on the Sonny & Cher TV show for his old pal and former Specialty A&R man, Sonny Bono.

While Art Rupe never had a New Orleans artist who turned out to be a household name like Imperial's Fats Domino, he did make more than his share of great records there, not the least of which were many of the classics by Specialty's non-New Orleans star, Little Richard, recorded at Cosimo's with that classic house band propelled by Earl Palmer and with solos by Lee Allen. 'Nuff said.

—Billy Vera, 1992

Original sessions produced by
ART RUPE,
FRED MENDELSON,
BUMPS BLACKWELL,
LEE RUPE,
or **HAROLD BATTISTE**

Compiled and produced for reissue by
BILLY VERA

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The Billy Vera Collection

"Got a Brand New Baby"
and "4 O'Clock Blues" courtesy of
Fred Mendelsohn and Paul Gayten.

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(Biggs-Madison) publ. unknown [Regal 3287] September 1950
- 3. LITTLE MR. MIDNIGHT**
with PAUL GAYTEN BAND:
4 O'CLOCK BLUES 2:41
(Eddie Durham) publ. unknown [Regal 3287] September 1950
- 4. LLOYD PRICE:**
RESTLESS HEART 2:33
(Lloyd Price) [SP 440] June 26, 1952
- 5. LLOYD PRICE:**
AIN'T IT A SHAME 2:40
(Price) [SP 452] October 13, 1952
- 6. WILLIE JOHNSON:**
SAY BABY 2:14
(Chris Kenner) [SP 493] March 13, 1954
- 7. WILLIE JOHNSON:**
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- 8. EARL KING:**
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(Earl Johnson) [SP 531] unknown date
- 9. LLOYD LAMBERT BAND:**
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(Lambert-Blackwell) [SP 553] April 25, 1955
- 10. GUITAR SLIM:**
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(W.E. Bayem) [SP 557] April 19 or 25, 1955
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(Clifton Chenier) [SP 568] September 9, 1955
- 14. BUMPS BLACKWELL:**
GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY 2:42
(Blackwell-Marascakos) Jondora Music/Robin Hood Music/
Third Story Music-BMI previously unissued demo, unknown date
- 15. ROY MONTRELL:**
OOOH-WOW 2:27
(Montrell-Blackwell) [SP 583] August 18, 1956
- 16. EDGAR BLANCHARD:**
STEPPING HIGH 1:50
(Alvin Tyler) [SP 586] August 17, 1956
- 17. LI'L MILLET:**
ALL AROUND THE WORLD 2:25
(Blackwell-Miller) previously unissued demo, unknown date
- 18. ART NEVILLE:**
OOOH-WHEE BABY 2:08
(Art Neville) [SP 592] October 25, 1956
- 19. LARRY WILLIAMS:**
JUST BECAUSE 2:46
(Price) Duchess Music BMI [SP 597] February 25, 1957
- 20. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
CRY PRETTY BABY 2:16
(Roeland Byrd) Parker/Ebb Catalog-BMI
[Ebb 101] circa March 1957
- 21. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
LOOK WHAT YOU'RE
DOING TO ME 2:25
(Byrd) Parker/Ebb-BMI [Ebb 106] circa March 1957
- 22. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
MISERY 1:59
(Byrd) Parker/Ebb-BMI [Ebb 106] circa March 1957
- 23. PROFESSOR LONGHAIR:**
LOOKA, NO HAIR 2:04
(Byrd) Parker/Ebb-BMI [Ebb 121] circa March 1957
- 24. THE MONITORS:**
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(Phoenix-Kidd-Smith-Tircuit) [SP 622] circa 1958
- 25. JERRY BYRNE:**
CARRY ON 1:55
(Rebenmack-David) [SP 662] August 16, 1958

All selections published by ATV Music (BMI), except as indicated.

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GUITAR SLIM • WILLIE JOHNSON • LLOYD PRICE
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